

PICSE Success Stories 1

- scientists teaching students, linking with industry, forging lasting careers

Odin Frannsen – Agronico

Agricultural researcher Odin Frannsen might not have thought that an agricultural science degree would have taken him from one coast of Australia to another. Yet in almost 10 years since being introduced to the world of science, Odin's career path has been vast and varied.

Odin was among the first cohort of students to attend the PICSE industry placements, back when the program began in 1999. He attended the industry placement one year, and returned the year after participating in both the camp and industry placement on the North-West Coast of Tasmania.

"The camp and placements really covered a lot, in terms of different career paths," he said.

On graduating from UTAS, Odin started his career with Agronico in Tasmania, working in research and development. He worked at the company's Cradle Coast site for three years before the call of the warmer climes and breathtaking surf breaks beckoned.

"I wanted to make a move to Queensland and I approached Agronico about the idea of me working up there for them," he said. "They liked the idea and now we (Agronico) have an office on the Sunshine Coast."

Odin is also half way through his Honours with UTAS, where he juggles his time between study and work across the two states.



Kieran Rix – SeedEnergy Australia



Kieran at his 2002 Industry Placement in a hop field.

Keiran attended the PICSE Industry Placement Scholarship in 2001 with no particular interest in agricultural science. He was amazed by his placement with Serve-Ag and enrolled in a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at University of Tasmania the following year. He has since linked in with agri-forestry company, SeedEnergy Australia, who are funding his PhD research into seed purity and germination problems of Tasmanian Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*), which is a major export industry for Tasmania developing genetically superior orchard seed for plantations. Kieran is closely linked with the industry that supports his

research and with whom he may find long term employment in the future.

Luke Doecke – Agri Exchange and Agri Tech, South Australia

Agri-Tech Irrigation Enterprises' new manager, Alan Hillier, is not alone in lamenting the problems for industry and business in finding suitable people to design and install irrigation systems for horticultural businesses in the Waikerie and Riverland region. Through the Industry Placement Scholarship, PICSE-Growsmart has developed contact with South Australia's top science students and is able to link them with businesses to address the skills shortage in primary industry.



Luke Doecke completed an Industry Placement Scholarship in 2006, the first year of the PICSE-Growsmart program in South Australia. He was placed at Yandilla Park (now called Agri-Exchange) where he gained exposure to a variety of areas including irrigation design, nursery management, pest management and soil analysis. He is currently studying at Roseworthy, but has been contracted by Agri-Tech to work during his holidays and whenever he can afford time from his studies. Alan has found him to be excellent at learning on the job and would like to employ him full time when he finishes his degree.

Agri-Tech are hoping to expand their business to include more soil analysis, irrigation design and follow-up service which Luke would be ideal for considering his background.

Sarah Gatenby – Tasmanian Young Farmer of the Year 2009

Sarah attended the IPS in 2002. Coming from a farm she was always interested in agriculture, but not



necessarily post graduate research. She has since completed her BAgSc and is in the final writing up stage of her Masters in animal production and farm management. This year she has been named the Tasmanian Young Farmer of the Year and is only the second woman in the award's history to claim that title. She also works part time for Roberts Merchandise, an agricultural supplies company in the Tasmanian Midlands. Sarah is still involved with PICSE and will be talking about her career and research pathway at this year's IPS Reunion in June.